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ABSTRACT

Further education in Great Britain often finds itself at the receiving end of a rapidly growing number of national policy initiatives, such as centralization, increasing influence of employers, use of agencies, formula or unit costing funding, and the Education Reform Act. The educational development that most affects those who are involved in developing and delivering education for potential bakers is the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ) and its implications: competency-based learning; accreditation of workplace experience; a modular curriculum; flexibility of learning format, time, and place; and credit for prior learning. Alongside the issue of NCVQ developments, the other critical issue for delivering high-quality education and training for the bakery and confectionery industry is obtaining and deploying resources in an educational world ruled by the new legislation, agencies, unit costs, and one line budgeting. Staff development and shrewd management of education and training facilities will be required in order to survive. In addition to a mastery of the educational scene imposed by the NCVQ and successful resource management, providers of bakery education and training opportunities must meet the needs of the industry, which will experience both internal and external changes in the 1990s. (KC)

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Partnership in development - threat or opportunity

Author

DJ Cook
Staff Tutor

Date

June 1988

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BAKERY EDUCATION IN THE 1990'S No. 2.

PARTNERSHIP IN DEVELOPMENT - THREAT OR OPPORTUNITY

Edited by Don Cook - Staff Tutor: Further Education Staff College

INTRODUCTION

This paper summarises the significant inputs and discussions which occurred at Study Conference 88/14/1, "Bakery Courses for the 1990's"; held at the Mendip Centre of the Further Education Staff College, 28th - 31st March 1988. The organisers have then developed the implications for Bakery education as part of an ongoing process of raising awareness and developing initiatives, which will lead to a partnership between education, training and industry, which; in turn, leads to a thriving bakery industry, with education meeting all of its needs, in the 1990's.

The editor had based this paper on the contributions of the other conference organisers:-

Martin Mullaly - Brunel Technical College, Bristol.
Ian Wheale - National Bakery School, Polytechnic of the South Bank.
Mike Whieldon - National Bakery School, Polytechnic of the South Bank.

and those making specific inputs to the conference:-

David Alderton - Sparsholt College, Hampshire.
Nick Brewster - Development Officer, FEU.
Peter Davies - Staff Tutor, FESC.
Bob Saunders - Staff Tutor, FESC.
Mike Webber - National Training Officer, BCCCA.
David Whitbread, Under Secretary (Education), ACC.

PART ONE

FURTHER EDUCATION: POINTERS TO NATIONAL POLICY

Further Education together with the education service and local government more generally finds itself at the receiving end of a rapidly growing number of national policy initiatives. these initiatives are often ill co-ordinated and may seen incoherent, but there is a coherence in the philosophy or the prejudice (depending on your point of view) which informs them. Several themes can be perceived.

CENTRALISATION

The Government increasingly seeks to ensure that its own policies are implemented and there is less room for alternative policies to be developed. The routes to achieving this are varied. There is a growth in specific funding from the Government or its agencies: through the MSC NAFE agreement, Education Support Grants, In-Service training grants, TVEI and the various MSC training programmes, for example.

ROLE OF EMPLOYERS

A number of initiatives seek to increase the direct involvement and influence of employers on the provision of education and particularly further education and training. MSC is to become the Training Commission, with the majority of Commissions drawn from employers. NCVQ is employment led. Local Employer Networks are being established to articulate the view of employers locally in a forum that is separate from any LEA or college based forum. The Education Reform Bill seeks to make employers the main component of college governing bodies. This will be partly because of the view that further education is basically a service to employers that should meet their needs for the provision of vocational education and training. It also probably reflects a view that the commitment of employers to vocational education and training will be increased if they can be involved in this way and feel they have some ownership of what is being provided.

USE OF AGENCIES

The Government view seems to be that it is more effective and efficient to deliver a service at arm's length through an agency. YTS and the new Adult Employment Training Scheme are based on the use of managing agents. Current legislation will require local authorities to put a range of their support services out for competitive tender.

The provisions of the Education Reform Bill will, through statutory provision for local financial management, bring a college nearer to being an agency rather than a direct arm of the local education authority.

FORMULA OR UNIT COSTING FUNDING

While support services, such as cleaning or grounds maintenance, may be subject to competitive tendering, the direct service to customers seems to recognised as requiring at least some greater continuity of provision. Regular competitive tendering with the possibility of frequent changes of provider does not seem to be envisaged at this stage for the education service, apart from perhaps some specific courses at the margin of total provision. The thrust, therefore, is to standardise funding as far as possible on a unit cost basis. Standard funding per trainee is already a feature of MSC programmes for youth and adult training. The Education Reform Bill will require LEAs to devise funding formulae for their colleges that are basically related to student numbers. The DES guidance on this urges the simplest possible formula rather than any very sophisticated approach which seeks to recognise too many cost variables.

EDUCATION REFORM BILL

The Bill removes higher education from the control of the local authorities with its funding to come nationally through PCFC and those colleges which are significant HE providers becoming independent of the LEA. It will leave untidy funding arrangements where LEAs still have to pay for FE provision made by colleges in PCFC sector and PCFC has to pay for HE provision left in those colleges that remain with LEAs.

LEAs will retain strategic responsibility for the overall provision of further education in their area. They will be required to allocate budgets to their colleges based on target student numbers. However, decisions on how to spend that budget, including decision on staffing establishment, appointments and dismissals, will be entirely for the college. Colleges will be controlled by new governing bodies on which employers predominate.

The intention is that further education should be responsive to the needs of employers and the labour market, that detailed decisions should be delegated as near as possible to the point of implementation, and that the funding regime should ensure efficiency in delivery. In effect, the college will be seen as a business with a number of customers or clients. Some work will be commissioned directly by central Government or its agencies such as MSC.

Normal FE provision will be commissioned by the LEA. Employers will provide a third group of customers, sometimes for full-cost course and sometimes for the provision funded in full or part by the LEA of Government. And of course, the students remain crucially important customers of the service. There must be a concern that prescribing administrative procedures through legislation will lead to a loss of flexibility. The tensions between the strategic role of the LEA and relative independence of the College do not seem to have been properly resolved. Simple funding formulae and a misuse of performance indicators could, in some cases, fail to recognise real local needs. The major policy changes are coming at a time of significant demographic change as well as change in educational and training needs.

The challenge for colleges will be to continue to identify and meet the needs of employers and students within a financial regime that may grow tighter and create increasing reliance on course fee income rather than central or local government funding.

PART TWO

SPECIFIC EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS - CRITICAL FOR THE BAKERY TEACHER

The educational development which overwhelmingly affects all of us, the vehicle by which the national policy can be brought about, is the development of NCVQ and the further development which are inherent within it: competence based learning, accreditation of work place experience, a modular curriculum, flexibility of how, where and the pace at which learning take place, acknowledgement and credit for prior learning - none of which need involve a college of further or higher education, including their bakery school, at all!

WHAT EXACTLY IS NCVQ?

- It is NOT another examining/validating body. NCVQ's role is to organise and monitor the approved bodies that will make accredited awards at the various levels in an occupational sector. An analogy is the role of the Independent Broadcasting Authority; like the IBA, NCVQ will arrange the bids for franchises for a limited period in a specified subject/occupational area and then see that they are operating according to national recommendations and particular contract standards.

- NCVQ does NOT have statutory powers but some very powerful levers are readily available to enforce change. It is conceivable that local authorities and colleges could have that part of their Rate Support grant given to the MSC held back unless college programme include the new National Vocational Qualifications.

- NCVQ is NOT controlled by the MSC. The NCVQ will be on a part with the MSC in its standing with the Department of Employment. It will work jointly with MSC to secure the National Standards of occupational competence needed to form the basis for vocational qualifications in all occupational groupings.

- It will NOT award the NVQ's but will put a hallmark on approved qualifications alongside those of the examining and validating body and by the words National Vocational Qualification appearing in the title of approved awards.

- The National Council for Vocational Qualifications is a Government appointed quango established to undertake reforms in the field of vocational qualifications.

THE REMIT OF THE NCVQ

The nine specific tasks set for the NCVQ by Government are to:

- secure standards of occupational competence and ensure that vocational qualifications are based upon them

- design and implement a new national framework for vocational qualifications

- approve bodies making accredited awards

- obtain comprehensive coverage of an occupational section

- secure arrangements for quality assurance

- set up effective liaison with bodies awarding vocational qualifications

- establish a national database for vocational qualifications

- undertake or arrange to be undertaken research and development to discharge these functions

- promote vocational education, training and qualifications.

Source: **The NCVQ, Its purposes and Aims**

Although there may not be much evidence of NCVQ activity in some specific vocational areas at present, all the evidence indicates that the aim of bringing all vocational areas into the NVQ framework by 1991 will be achieved.

The danger of being dealt with late in the programme is that standards may have been established for some parts of a broad vocational area which are imposed on other, where they may be less appropriate; the concept of applying that which is considered appropriate for catering or the meat trades to bakery and confectionery illustrates this point. The message is clear and it is for the bakery and confectionery industry/training/education partnership to quickly and clearly establish what is best for itself and to offer this package to the NCVQ. If it is not already too late.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT FOR BAKERY EDUCATION

Alongside the issue of the NCVQ developments, the other critical issue for delivering a quality education/training provision for the bakery and confectionery industry is obtaining and deploying resources in an educational world ruled by GERBIL - the new legislation, by the SSR, unit costs and one line budgeting. Does the bakery school 'manager' go for efficiency within the educational system, or self-funding courses or an acceptable combination of both. Whatever decisions are made, staff development and shrewd management of education and training facilities will be required in order to survive.

As managers of resources in further education, the providers of education and training in bakery courses will have to demonstrate management control, which is the process of ensuring that chosen courses of action are maintained and that desired ends are achieved.

It involves:-

- identifying the key variables to be monitored.
- setting a target level of performance for these variables
- developing and implementing a system for collecting analysing and reporting on the key variables
- having a clear view of what action should follow if performance falls below the target level.

Management control will critically involve an understanding of indicators of effectiveness and efficiency and promoting their fair application to bakery education and training.

In the measurement of performance, we can distinguish between effectiveness which is to do with outcomes - how well the job was (or is being) done; and efficiency which is to do with the resources consumed in doing the job. Indicators of effectiveness and efficiency lie at the heart of management control.

The recommended effectiveness indicators are the ratios provided by:-

- students enrolled/target enrolment - which provides a measure of the attractiveness of a course to clients

- students completing/students enrolled - which provides a measure of student satisfaction and progress through a course

- "successful" students/students enrolled - which provides a measure of the effectiveness of courses with a clear examination or qualification aim

- students "progressed"/students completing - which indicates the quality and relevance of NAFE to higher education and professional advancement.

The recommended efficiency and the Staff Student Ratio (SSR) which needs to be qualified by the following recommendations from "Managing Colleges Efficiently" (HMSO ISBN 0-11-2706266).

- The annual monitoring survey AMS) should be extended as quickly as possible to include all colleges.

- at the whole college level of aggregation three SSR's should be computed and published - (1) a "net teaching" SSR after allowing for abatement and cost recovery courses.

- (2) a "gross teaching" SSR in which lecturer class contact hours and student taught hours associated with cost recovery courses are included.

- (3) a "gross (whole college)" SSR in which both the abatements are added back to the lecturer side of the ratio and the lecturer class contact hours and student taught hours associated with cost recovery course are included.

The SSR as an efficiency indicator is hopefully only an interim measure and within five years all colleges will be capable of generating the information to allow the introduction of unit costing as their main efficiency indicator. This should be capable of breakdown into unit costs for:-

- cost per full-time equivalent (FTE) student
- cost per "completing" student
- cost per "successful" student

It is hoped that the cost per FTE student will be calculable at all levels of aggregation within a college. The cost for "completing" and "successful" students can only be computed for courses. In all three cases the unit cost should be analysable into component parts - academic staff, technician staff, supplies, services, etc.

The development of unit costs as efficiency indicators will develop alongside the use of the budget as envisaged in the Education Reform Bill: Part II Higher and Further Education, which requires each local authority to draw up a scheme providing for:-

- the determination of each college's annual budget.
- the delegation of the budget to the governing bodies of colleges

At a college level the budget will be used:-

- as a device for making and co-ordinating plans
- for communicating these plans to those responsible for carrying them out
- in motivating and empowering educational managers
- as a standard against which performance may be compared

PART THREE

THE BAKERY INDUSTRIES NEEDS FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING

In addition to a mastery of the educational scene imposed by the NCVQ and successful resource management, providers of bakery education and training opportunities must meet the needs of the industry. What are these likely to be in the 1990's.

The industry will obviously build on the current trends. These in turn depend on:-

- changes internal to the industry; technical, market and cultural
- changes external to the industry, e.g. demographic and the European Community after all the barriers come down in 1992

INTERNAL CHANGES

Changes in production methods

- manning; numbers and pattern
- specialisation
- uncertain duration of skill requirement
- substitute of knowledge for craft

Implications for colleges

- training boom, declining college share?
- balance adults/young people
- long non-modular courses
- education versus training
- flexible modular short courses
- rapid response
- relevance
- diversity
- open learning
  * as tutors and resource centres
  * as writers
  * as organisers

Changes in market

- biscuits saturated market, competition, retailer power
- plant cake, competition, size of market, effect on baking industry employment
- bread and short life cake
  * squeeze on small bakers from majors and in-store
  * small baker response
  * implications for colleges: probable changes in small bakers VET requirements; working for plant bakers and for the in-store sector

Cultural change

- close to the customer
- mainstream "core activity" philosophy
- rising expectations for service
- competition

EXTERNAL CHANGES

Demographic - contraction of young people market

EC 1992 - competition of products and people

CONCLUSIONS

The successful provider of bakery education and training in the 1990's will have to be knowledgeable about the educational developments, the resourcing of a high quality education and training provision and the ever changing needs of an industry itself facing change at an even faster rate. This will have to be carried out in a situation where there will be real competition for young people who can benefit from the education and training opportunities that lead to a progressing career in a go-ahead industry; a situation which will call for more training and re-training of adults in a way which satisfies all concerned:-

- The industry and its need for an effective workforce.
- The student who wants better work experience as a result of education and training.
- the deliverers of education and training who in turn deserve a satisfying job.
- The "college" which will have to carry out its education and training effectively if it is to survive against competitors who will become ever more challenging.

Meeting these challenges, perhaps as a primary activity, from which all others develop, means marketing bakery education successfully - getting the right products in the right places at the right times at the right prices and with the right publicity in order to ensure the maximum mutual benefit for both customers and providers.

The course that this paper reports raised may important issues for bakery education and training and it critical partnership with industry - for mutual benefit. It is the organisers and contributors who hope that events that flow from it will make a contribution to the further development of the understanding and managerial skills required by bakery education and training manager in the 1990's.